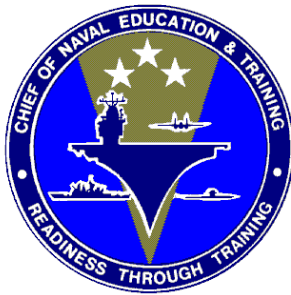


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Navy Welding Course Moves to the Fleet

PENSACOLA, FLA --- In order to keep Sailors closer to their homeports, reduce travel costs, and improve quality of life, the Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET) has begun teaching its advanced welding course in fleet concentration areas in San Diego, CA and Norfolk, VA. Classes began at the Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity (SIMA) in San Diego, CA and the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, VA on January 18, 2000. Two additional courses will be taught at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, WA and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, HI beginning in June 2000. Sailors will no longer attend the welding course in Great Lakes, Illinois. The course lasts 14 weeks and gives graduates a specialty in advanced welding.

Teaching the course in these new locations is part of CNET's Homeport Training (HPT) initiative that was implemented last year in order to expand training opportunities, reduce costs and improve the Navy's quality of life. In January 1999, the Navy began training Norfolk-based mess specialists at Tidewater Community College in Tidewater, VA instead to sending them to the course in San Diego as had previously been the norm. The Navy plans to increase the number of courses in fleet concentration areas in fiscal years 2000 and 2001.

"Locating training courses in fleet concentration areas allows Sailors to spend more time with their families instead of away from home on temporary duty for training," explains Dean Norman, analyst on the staff of the Chief of Naval Education and Training in charge of the Homeport Training initiative.

(more)

Relocating the advanced welding course to the fleet concentration areas will result in cost avoidance of an estimated \$1.7 million per year in contract and travel costs. “Reduced costs are not the only benefit” added Norman. “The relocation is directly in sync with CNET's overall mission to provide training faster, maintaining or improving quality, at less cost.”

Last year, CNET created Local Training Authorities (LTAs) in fleet concentration areas to establish the training needs of their respective units and develop a program that provided quality training as efficiently as possible. The relocation of the advanced welding course is a direct result of that initiative.